

Remarks

The Applicants have amended Claims 1, 8 and 19 to recite that the cellulosic ester has a substitution degree of hydroxyl groups of 1.8 to 2.9 per glucose unit in the cellulosic ester. Support may be found throughout the Applicants' Specification such as in the paragraph spanning pages 20 and 21. The Applicants have also amended Claims 6 and 18 to correct minor typographical errors. Entry of those changes into the Official File is respectfully requested.

Claims 1 and 5 – 8 stand rejected under 35 USC §102 as being anticipated by Ogata. The Applicants respectfully submit that Ogata fails to explicitly or implicitly disclose the subject matter in those claims. Reasons are set forth below.

The Applicants have discovered that the substitution degree of the hydroxyl groups in the cellulose of the cellulosic ester has a great influence with respect to compatibility and is a very important factor in such compatibility. This is sharply contrasted to the Ogata disclosure that does not disclose that the substitution degree impacts compatibility. Instead, Ogata discloses that the substitution degree impacts biodegradability. In that regard, the Applicants invite the Examiner's attention to page 1219 of Ogata in the righthand column, wherein Ogata discloses:

It is known that the biodegradability of CA depends on the degree of substitution (DS). Biodegradation can be observed in a sample with a DS of less than 2.5...

In other words, Ogata, while acknowledging a substitution degree of the hydroxyl groups, does so in the context of biodegradability, not compatibility. Thus, Ogata is directed to a completely different characteristic.

In any event, the teachings of Ogata disclose that their materials as indicated in the Materials and Experimental section of Ogata reveal that the degree of substitution was 1.52. This is sharply contrasted to the Applicants' claimed degree of substitution of 1.8 to 2.9. Thus, the Applicants